

Brahmacharya

(Celibacy)

M.P. Bhattathiri

Retired Chief Technical Examiner

Govt. of Kerala

"Brahmacharya or spotless chastity is the best of all penances; a celibate of such spotless chastity is not a human being, but a god indeed... To the celibate who conserves the semen with great efforts, what is there unattainable in this world ? By the power of the composure of the semen, one will become just like Myself."

- Sri Sankaracharya

The importance of Brahmacharya is clearly explained in Yejurveda. In this modern life very few only understand this and practice it. All Vedas and other scriptures of Hinduism lay great emphasis regarding Brahmacharya. In vedic period a student is also known as Brahmachari. By preserving the energy, strength and vitality of mind and various organs one can lead a happy, energetic and healthy life. The mind will be clear and brain will superb for a Brhmachari. It enhances the strength, life span and health since it is the mine of all virtues. Brahmacharya is the dam of all pleasures of life and only learned people keep it and their power and life increases and all sickness is destroyed. It is easy to preach and to practice is very difficult. One should try to be always in the company of noble people and control their senses as far as possible to get the actual reward of human life. A man is known by the company he keeps.

If one always move in the company of good, learned and noble ones there is no doubt that he can be one among them one day. Company is contagious and man changes his colors accordingly sooner or later. He cannot remain unaffected for long best company means not only noble people but also good books written by great scholars, Sages, Saints, Prophets, Rishis, and Munis. These contain vast treasures of wealth and will make one so rich that the worldly riches would appear very insignificant. One of the verses in YajurVeda state that taught people who are actually endowed with divine powers should do two things in this world. One is that they should propagate the teachings of Brahmacharya and control of senses so that people may become strong and healthy leading a full vigorous life.

Next thing is by education and practice thereof, they should teach one and all how to develop their inner strength and power so that people may enjoy their blissful life fully in all respects. In another verse it is stated that such people who abandon the company of bad people and give up all bad evil habits and keep away from immoral life increasing their vitality beget good children, they strength and Glorify their race and their country.

Brahmacharya will give the power to face and solve any problems as a boat can ferry people through turbulent waters of the sea. A Brahmachari will be liked and respected in all the societies and meetings. In one verse it is explained that the age of a boy begins at twenty-sixth year and for a girl it is seventeen and up to this period they should practice Brahmacharya at any cost and can get married. Those who get education following the rules of Brahmacharya, they shine like sun are quick in all what they do, like a hawk and become the hallmark of respect, enjoying their life skipping like a deer.

In the student life it would be better to preserve their vital fluid which is the life thread, so that they can utilize their energy and strength for their education and learning. In vedic period student is imparted with all the knowledge right from the Earth to the sun and in this way all divinity reside in his body and such students in future will assets to their country and world. They will have harmony of the head, heart and hand in such a way which will be beneficial to the society as a whole. It has been truly said that if our

hearts are strong, our heads are right in vain. A person without education is beast and a person without Dharma is like a beast.

Education and knowledge are like two eyes of a person which enable him to see things correctly and assess his own position. The purpose of education is to make man what he ought to be.

According to Vedas education on arts and material science is not enough and because major portion of achieving perfection can be achieved by studying spiritual science. The aim of life and education is that we may live a new life in the realm of self and the creation, with harmony and happiness and will become virtuous. Every second of the life should be fully utilized so that there is no room left for idling. It may be noted that “An idle mind is a devil’s workshop.” Of course relaxation and enjoyment should be there along with study to keep one fit and fresh and ready to face any challenges of life.

If proper education is not given to children parents become enemies since they get isolated in society. Teachers should take utmost care for understanding to develop good character and affection along with studies. They should be taught that all women are like mother, sister or daughter according to their age and they should be protected whenever necessary.

In Vedas it is also stated that Not to earn wealth at the cost of others pain and suffering .It is not good to be fatigue self too much both physically and mentally. Hard-work is the keystone to virtuous earning with the sweat of one’s own brow, not by lottery, speculation and gambling. Don’t do anything undesirable and harmful to the society. Acquire knowledge which can’t be stolen away by thieves than material wealth. A great scholar of ancient India Sri Pathanjali's in his teachings explains the importance of Brahmacharya and it is studied by foreign scholars and one such famous scholar Dr. Louis an eminent physician opined that most precious atoms of the blood enter into the composition of semen (in his book Chastity) . So preservation of semen by practicing continence helps the better development of brain, body, and mind .Dr. Nicholas says that

the best blood in the body goes to form the elements of reproduction in both the sexes .So if anybody waste semen he is loosing the best part of the blood and he becomes weak physically and intellegently. If preserved he becomes strong, intellectual, heroic and powerful.

Brahmacharya can be practiced by married people also. Chastity and fidelity are the foundation on which a strong and happy marital relationship stands and should be understood by husband and wife. In Srimad Bhagavatham a holy book of Hinduism it is clearly mentioned that practice of brahmacharya is also one of the important duties in married life and it is waived only for the purpose of procreation, austerity, purity, contentment and friendliness towards all. (11.18.43)

Ancient Rishi of India Pathanjali also says in his Yogasutra that CONTNENCE IS LIFE AND INCOTINENCE IS EQUAL TO DEATH. LORD SHIVA in the Jnanasamkalani Tantra says that". The wise do not regard the ordinary forms of asceticism as real asceticism. Continence is the highest asceticism. He who is a continent is equal to God. So especially youth in whom the future of our country rests, should practice celibacy as far as possible to lead the country and countrymen to have a prosperous future. Living examples are Sri A.B Vajpayee, President A.P.J.Kalam and Mata Amritananda may Devi.

Ref .Hindu.org, Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Bhagavad Gita, Yogasutra, Upanishaths, Tantra Texts, Srimad Bhagavatham